


Compliance Assistance



Pesticide Personal Protective Equipment

EMPLOYER
RESPONSIBILITIES



California's worker safety regulations specify safe work practices for employees who **handle** pesticides or work in **treated fields** (**field workers**, **early-entry field workers**). This booklet summarizes your responsibilities as an employer to **assure** that you provide the required personal protective equipment for your employees.

This booklet is not intended to replace product label information, the Pesticide Safety Information Series (PSIS) leaflets, or the California Code of Regulations. It is a reference tool that summarizes specific regulatory requirements and responsibilities that you – the employer – must follow. You are encouraged to contact the Agricultural Commissioner's office in the county or counties where you operate for any additional requirements specific to your area.

See **"Definitions You Need to Know"** at the back of this booklet for explanations of highlighted words.

What You Need To Do

First...

Tell your handler-employees and early-entry field worker employees, in a language they understand, about:

- Pesticides used,
- Pesticide safety hazards,
- Personal protective equipment,
- Other equipment used.
- Work procedures, and
- Pesticide worker safety regulations.

Second...

- **Assure** that all Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is inspected before each day of use for leaks, holes, tears, or worn parts.
- **Assure** that any damaged equipment is repaired or discarded, and replaced.
- **Assure** that you provide the PPE required by pesticide labeling and the worker safety regulations for the particular handling or early-entry activity.
- **Know** when certain label-required PPE may be substituted when using certain engineering controls (closed-systems, enclosed cabs, soluble bags).

- **Assure** that you provide a clean, pesticide-free place for employees to store any personal clothing not in use while at work handling pesticides.
- **Assure** that they wear the required PPE until the handling or early-entry activity is complete.
- **Assure** that they use the required PPE correctly.
- **Assure** that you take all precautions to prevent heat-related illness while the PPE is worn.

Third...

- **Provide** a clean-designated area where employees can remove their PPE at the end of their exposure period.
- **Provide** clean towels, soap, and sufficient water to allow for thorough washing.
- **Assure** that PPE remains under your control and that employees do not take home potentially contaminated PPE.

Fourth...

- **Assure** that any PPE to be reused is clean before each day of reuse according to instructions from the PPE manufacturer.

- **Assure** that potentially contaminated PPE is kept and washed separately from other clothing and laundry.
- **Assure** that clean PPE is either dried thoroughly before being stored or is put in a well ventilated place to dry.
- **Assure** that any person or firm assigned or hired to clean or repair potentially contaminated PPE is protected and informed of the hazards of the pesticides they may encounter.
- **Discard** any absorbent materials including PPE that have been drenched or heavily contaminated with a pesticide whose label bears the signal word 'DANGER' or 'WARNING.'

What If You Don't Comply?

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) and the County Agricultural Commissioners enforce California pesticide laws and regulations. It is your responsibility to take all reasonable measures to assure that employees handle and use pesticides in accordance with the requirements of law, regulations, and pesticide product labeling requirements.

If you follow the worker safety requirements, you protect your employee's health, the environment, and yourself. If you do not comply, you will violate federal and State law. DPR and the Counties' Agricultural Commissioners have the authority to levy substantial penalties on persons who violate pesticide laws. Penalties range from \$50 for minor violations to \$50,000, and imprisonment for certain violations that have 'created or reasonably could have created a hazard to human health or the environment.' Also, persons who hold a license or certificate issued by DPR and who are found in violation can have their license or certificate suspended or revoked.

Definitions You Need To Know

Handle – means mixing, loading, transferring, applying (including chemigation), or assisting with the application (including flagging) of pesticides (It does not include: local, state, or federal officials performing inspection, sampling, or other similar duties). Also, it includes:

- Incorporating (mechanical or watered-in) pesticides in the soil.
- Maintaining, servicing, repairing, cleaning, or handling equipment used in these activities that may contain residues.
- Working with opened (including emptied but not rinsed) containers of pesticides.
- Adjusting, repairing, or removing treatment site coverings.
- Entry into a treated area during any application or before the

inhalation exposure level listed on pesticide product labeling has been reached, or greenhouse ventilation criteria have been met.

- Performing the duties of a crop advisor, including field checking or scouting, making observations of the well being of plants, or taking samples during an application or during any restricted entry interval listed on pesticide product labeling.

Treated Field – means a field that has been treated with a pesticide or had a restricted entry interval in effect within the last 30 days (It does not include areas inadvertently contaminated by drift or overspray). Also, it includes:

- Associated roads, paths, ditches, borders, and headlands, if the pesticide was also directed to those areas.

Assure – means to take all reasonable measures so that the behavior, activity, or event in question occurs. When the behavior, activity, or event in question involves or concerns an employee, reasonable measures by an employer include determining that the employee has the knowledge to comply; providing the means to comply; supervising the work activity; and having and enforcing a written workplace disciplinary action policy covering the employer's requirements, as well as other measures required by pesticide law or regulation.

Field Worker – means any person who, for any kind of compensation, performs cultural activities in a field. It does not include performing tasks as a crop advisor, including field checking or scouting, making observations of the well being of the plants, or taking samples, nor does it include local, state, or federal officials performing inspection, sampling, or other similar duties.

Early-Entry Field Worker – means any person who enters into a treated field or other area after the pesticide application is complete, but before the restricted entry interval or other restrictions on entry for that pesticide have expired.

If you have questions or need more information, please contact your local County Agricultural Commissioner's office.

A complete set of the worker safety regulations is available online from the California Department of Pesticide Regulation's web site at: **www.cdpr.ca.gov**



**California Department
of Pesticide Regulation**

A Department of the California
Environmental Protection Agency